

# ACADEMIA| Letters

## *How to Read Marx's "Theses on Feuerbach"*

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Louis Althusser has the merit of having pointed out that the “transparency” traditionally attributed to the “Theses on Feuerbach” is false.<sup>1</sup> But he has opposed another myth to that of the transparency: the one of the “enigmatic.”<sup>2</sup> The most illustrious pretext of this myth, upon which the disciples of Althusser seek to lean, is Engel’s description of the theses as “notes quickly written for later elaboration, and absolutely not intended for print.”<sup>3</sup> For the first readers of Engels’s version in general the “Theses” appeared transparent. But there was, for example, a Giovanni Gentile who characterized them as *frammenti*.<sup>4</sup> In this line, Georges Labica enlarges the Althusserian enigmatization of the text by comparing this one with the fragments of Heraclitus,<sup>5</sup> called “the Obscure.” Pierre Macherey goes so far as to sacralize the *enigmatique*

1. Louis Althusser. *Pour Marx*. Paris : La découverte, 2005. P. 28.

2. Ibid.

3. Friedrich Engels, “[Vorbemerkung]” to *Ludwig Feuerbach und der Ausgang der klassischen deutschen Philosophie*. Frankfurt A. M.: Litterarische Anstalt (J. Rütten) 1888. P. VII.

4. Giovanni Gentile. *La filosofia di Marx. Studi critici* (1899). In *Opere complete*. Vol. XXVIII. Firenze: Sansoni, 1959. P. 68.

5. Georges Labica. *Karl Marx. Les Thèses sur Feuerbach*. Paris : Éditions Syllepse, 2014. P. 18.

by demanding to be “faithful” to it.<sup>6</sup>

But the “Theses on Feuerbach” themselves have nothing to do with the enigmatic. They are simply difficult, on the one hand, because of the nature of the subject matter and its consequent treatment; and on the other hand, because of their aphoristic form. But this must not lead us to the opinion that the “Theses” cannot be understood without reference to passages of other works of Marx.<sup>7</sup> I shall expose below 1) a technique by means of which Marx clarifies internally what he states; 2) a technique through which he highlights and confirms the correct direction of the reading. Against the demand of other Marx’s texts to understand the “Theses,” 3) I shall describe how Marx, on the contrary, utilizes the second technique to construct a special context, whose function is to develop what the text says for itself. 4) I shall show, by contrasting the traditionally dominant reading with the text itself, the difficulty that the former introduces into the latter; and finally I shall point out, through the example of thesis 11, how such difficulty entails others commonly attributed to the text, which are hence no more than pseudo-difficulties.

### **Apposition**

The first technique is that of apposition. In this text as in others Marx makes an extraordinary use of that grammatical construction. We can define it as the juxtaposition of two (or more) grammatical units which have the same referent, so that the latter, the “appositive,” defines the former, the “head.” Thus, in thesis 4 it is stated that Feuerbach starts out from

6. Pierre Macherey. *Marx 1845. Les « thèses » sur Feuerbach. Traduction et commentaire*. Paris: Éditions Amsterdam, 2008. P. 27.

7. *Ibid.* P. 26.

the fact “of religious self-alienation, of the duplication of the world into a religious and a worldly one.”<sup>8</sup> In the appositive, which is the second phrase, the “self” of the head appears as the “world,” which materialistically is the sensible world of men, that is, society. According to this appositive, the self-alienation consists in the fact that this world becomes a “worldly world,” which is that world itself, and a “religious world,” which is the same world but as an alien one.

Afterward Marx will complete this appositional definition of the religious self-alienation by developing the appositive. From the materialist point of view, from which Marx writes, that duplication of the world can only occur in the imagination. The duplicate of the sensible world is only a representation or, to use a term of thesis 6, an abstraction of the sensible world. And the process through which this duplication occurs is described by Marx as follows: “[...] the worldly foundation [of the religious word] lifts itself up from itself above itself and fixes to itself a self-subsistent Kingdom in the clouds [...]” By means of the spatial metaphor, Marx sensibilizes how the abstraction of the material world of men is separated from this one in the mind and made imaginarily — “in the clouds” — self-subsistent (*selbständig*).

*Selbständig* is usually translated as “independent” (Spanish “independiente,” French “indépendant,” Italian “independente,” etc.). But *selbständig* strictly means “standing-for-itself,” “existing-for-itself.” The point for Marx is the

8. I quote the “Theses” in my English translation published under the title: *Karl Marx’s Theses on Feuerbach. A New English Translation based on the New Marx-Engels-Gesamtausgabe*. Bonn, 2020. [https://www.academia.edu/42897184/Karl\\_Marx\\_s\\_Theses\\_on\\_Feuerbach\\_A\\_New\\_English\\_Translation\\_Based\\_on\\_the\\_New\\_Marx-Engels-Gesamtausgabe.\\_By\\_Carlos\\_Benda%C3%B1a-Pedroza](https://www.academia.edu/42897184/Karl_Marx_s_Theses_on_Feuerbach_A_New_English_Translation_Based_on_the_New_Marx-Engels-Gesamtausgabe._By_Carlos_Benda%C3%B1a-Pedroza).

movement from the self to the existence, the activity of the self. The “kingdom in the clouds,” as mere abstraction, does not exist for itself. What exists for itself, for its activity, is the world of men. The “kingdom in the clouds” exists for that one. Marx has firstly used the category of “foundation” (*Grundlage*) to present the content. The “kingdom in the clouds” does not found on itself, but on the world of men. It is this one which founds on itself. But he ends up thinking this content through the category of existence. What grounds on itself is the existing-for-itself. Now, in religion the worldly world founds on the religious one. This means that in religious self-alienation men *alienate*, that is, *transfer* the being self-subsistent of their world to the “kingdom in the clouds,” through which this is made into foundation of the former.

Now, what exists-for-itself is the substance (as we shall see later, the concept of substance is present in the “Theses” from the beginning). The existence-for-itself (*Selbständigkeit*) is therefore here the mode of existence of the substance. In thesis 4 the English “self-standing,” cognate of the German *selb-ständig*, would be the best translation of this word. But without an explanation, “self-standing” would be understood as meaning “independent.” Now, traditionally the mode of existence of the substance is called “subsistence.” For this reason I have translated *selbständig* as “self-subsistent.” To make the “kingdom in the clouds” self-subsistent entails, hence, to make it into substance. By starting from the oppositional definition — duplication of the world — we arrive thus at the following one. The religious self-alienation is the imaginary transfer of the being self-subsistent from the substance that is the world of men to its religious abstraction, which becomes thereby the substance and therefore foundation of this world.

## Reformulation

The second technique consists in reformulating a certain content of a thesis in another. In one case the content is expressed from the point of view required by a determinate chain of reasoning; in the other, from the different point of view demanded for a different chain of reasoning. But Marx demarcates the reformulation precisely through resources as the reiteration of the structure of the phrase, the semantic and phonetic similarity of the key words of the two texts, and others of the same kind. The result for the content is its development, and for the reading the corroboration or rectification of the correct direction.

For example, when Marx uses the spatial metaphor to describe the process of religious self-alienation, he makes something more than a metaphor. This one has been already utilized in thesis 3. Just as in thesis 4 the world “lifts itself up from itself above itself,” so in the preceding aphorism the doctrine of circumstances and education “splits society into two parts, of which one [the educator] is lifted up above it.” The metaphor and the structure of its expression are the same and the key words are semantically and phonetically similar: *erheben* in thesis 3 and *abheben* in 4. The intention of the author is hence that the metaphor, the expressive structure and the key word function in thesis 3 as indicators of the text of thesis 4 in which they are used again. To fulfill this effect in English, in sum, I use “lift up” for the German key words.

Now, thesis 4 describes the religious process through which the abstraction of the world is made self-subsistent. Therefore, we understand now the education, that is, the activity of the educator, as a self-subsistent abstraction. The result is the explication of the materialist doctrine of circumstances and education as a religious self-alienation

theoretically exposed. Now, to educate is to replace certain ideas by others. The educator therefore would believe that he can transform men and circumstances by transforming the ideas (above all, for the French creators of this doctrine, the religious idea). But as counter-effect, we are led to interpret Feuerbach as such educator, and his critique of religious self-alienation as a version of that doctrine, with the pretension of transforming the worldly world by transforming its religious duplicate (which will be made explicit in thesis 6).

This moment of the exposition of the “Theses” is overlooked by the traditional reading. This is made visible in the translations. As above shown, in tesis 3 the word *erheben* indicates the text of thesis 4, having in this one *abheben* as counterpart. But these phonetically similar words are usually translated by terms in this respect totally distinct from one another. For instance, in French, Labica gives *élevée* in thesis 3 and *détache* in thesis 4;<sup>9</sup> Noema, in Italian, *sollevato* in the former, and *stacchi* in the latter;<sup>10</sup> Wenceslao Roces, in Spanish, *halla colocada (por encima)* in one case and *separe* in the other;<sup>11</sup> in English, *Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, Collected Works (MECW)*<sup>12</sup> and Smith use respectively “is (superior)” and “lifts off,”<sup>13</sup> O’Malley “as being (above)” and “becomes detached,”<sup>14</sup> and Easton and Guddat “towers”

9. Labica. Op. cit. Pp. 27-30.

10. Redazione. Trans. *Karl Marx. Tesi su Feuerbach. Noema*. No. 5-1. 2014. Pp. 3-5. <http://riviste.unimi.it/index.php/noema>

11. Wenceslao Roces. Trans. *Carlos Marx. [Tesis sobre Feuerbach]*. In Carlos Marx, Federico Engels. *La ideología alemana*. Trans. W. Roces. Montevideo: Ediciones Pueblos Unidos, 1968. Pp. 665-668.

12. Anon. Trans. *Karl Marx. [Theses on Feuerbach] 1) ad Feuerbach*. In MECW. Vol. 5. Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1976. Pp. 3-5.

13. Cyril Smith. Trans. *Karl Marx. “Theses on Feuerbach.”* 2002. <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1845/theses/index.htm>

14. J. O’Malley and R. A. Davis. Trans. *Marx. “On Feuerbach” (Brussels,*

and “becomes separate”<sup>15</sup>. This weakens the connection that Marx produced between *erheben* and *abheben* in virtue of their similarity, and therefore diverts attention from the logical nexus between the texts he wanted to highlight.

An analogous error culminates that reading. Concerning thesis 11, “interpretation” is usually understood as theory without transforming consequences.<sup>16</sup> But Marx himself states something more concrete. The analysis that arrives at this result (see below pp. 11-15) is confirmed by him as follows. The term “world” (*Welt*) draws our attention to the only preceding place in which it and its family member “worldly” (*weltliche*) are used (six times): to the above considered text of thesis 4. In this way we are led to understand “interpretation” as a philosophical form of the religious self-alienation. To “interpret the world” is to attribute to it a meaning, and the meaning is here the self-subsistent abstraction of the world that grounds it. “To interpret the world differently” is, in definitive, to replace one self-subsistent abstraction of the world by another as its foundation. This has been shown in thesis 6: Feuerbach replaces the religious abstraction by the abstraction “genus,” which “binds the many individuals,” that is, founds society.

But, as we have seen, from thesis 4 Marx has just suggested the doctrine of circumstances and education as theoretical form of religious self-alienation, and Feuerbach as

*March 1845*). In *Marx. Early Political Writings*. Ed. and trans. J. O'Malley with R. A. Davis. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994. Pp. 116-118.

15. L. D. Easton and K. H. Guddat. Trans. *Karl Marx. “Theses on Feuerbach”*. In *Writings of the Young Marx on Philosophy and Society*. Trans. ed. L. D. Easton and K. H. Guddat. Indianapolis, Indiana: Hackett Publishing Company, 1997. Pp. 400-402

16. See, e. g., Lev Churbanov. “Preface” to MECW. Vol. 5. P. XV.

educator. This suggestion is now reinforced from the second clause of thesis 11. By means of the verb “transform” (*verändern*) Marx refers us to thesis 3, the only preceding place where he has used this word and members of the same family (four times). He therefore suggests that the philosophers are the educator lifted up above society, that is, above the world. What the educator teaches is the illusion of transforming men and circumstances, the world, by transforming an abstraction into another one. Furthermore, this theoretical self-alienation, in resolving illusorily the contradiction, has the practical consequence of consolidating the existing world.

But the expression on which Marx has insisted the most (three times) in explaining the religious world in thesis 4 is “worldly foundation.” Therefore, from thesis 11 Marx highlights that the “interpretation” of the world, suggested as philosophical form of religious self-alienation, is to be clarified by the contradiction of its worldly foundation. In this context, “the point is to transform it” refers us directly to what in thesis 3 is the point: the transforming of circumstances and the self-transformation, that is, the annihilation of the contradiction between men and circumstances through “revolutionaire practice.” The verbal triangle through which Marx infrastructures the logical connections between theses 4 and 3, and of thesis 11 with 4 and 3 is thus completed.

That the traditional interpretation is blind for this reveals itself again in the translations. Some intend apparently to beautify stylistically Marx by using synonyms instead of his repetitions. For example, in Italian Gentile gives *mutato* and forms of *variare* for *ändern* and related terms in thesis 3, and *cambiarlo* in thesis 11.<sup>17</sup> In French Macherey, *changer* and family members, and *modification* in the former, and in the

17. Gentile. Op. cit. Pp. 68-69.



latter *transformer*.<sup>18</sup> In English Pascal,<sup>19</sup> Bottomore,<sup>20</sup> Easton and Guddat,<sup>21</sup> *Marx-Engels-Selected Works* (MESW),<sup>22</sup> MECW<sup>23</sup> and Cyril Smith<sup>24</sup> utilize correctly “change” and its family members in those two theses, but they employ “secular basis” instead of “worldly basis” in thesis 4, through which the triangular infrastructure of the logical connections is undercut. This evidences that Marx’s meaning of the verbal repetitions is overlooked, and that in thesis 3 and 11 the latter have reiterated the forms of the word “change” accidentally with respect the intention of the author.<sup>25</sup>

### Counter-Textualization

Marx uses also this technique to develop contents of the “Theses” by means of texts of other authors. To illustrate it I return to the above cited definition and description of the fact of religious self-alienation in thesis 4. The description constitutes the protasis of a phrase whose apodosis is the clarification of the fact. Marx declares, in sum, that this one can be

18. Macherey. Op. cit. Pp. 13-15.

19. R. Pascal. Trans. *Karl Marx. “Theses on Feuerbach.”* In Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. *The German Ideology*. Ed. tr. R. Pascal. New York: International Publishers, 1947. Pp.195-199.

20. T. B. Bottomore Trans. *Karl Marx. [„Theses on Feuerbach (1845).“]*. In Karl Marx. *Selected Writings in Sociology & Social Philosophy*. Ed. tr. T. B. Bottomore. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964. Pp. 67-69.

21. Easton and Guddat. Loc. cit.

22. Anon. MESW. Loc. cit.

23. Anon. MECW. Loc. cit.

24. Smith. Loc. cit.

25. I do not criticize, naturally, the translators as such, who are all excellent; I criticize the traditional reading, which does not grasp the significance of the referred connections in the German text itself.

only clarified by the self-contradicting of the worldly foundation. He concludes that, therefore, this foundation “must be understood in itself in its contradiction as well as practically revolutionized.” The work that Feuerbach does not accomplish is to understand the foundation in its contradiction. Now, the process of definition and description of the fact anticipates and precises, by means of a text of Hegel, both the clarification and the critique of Feuerbach’s ignorance of this clarification.

Such text introduces the section of chapter VI of the *Phenomenology of Spirit* entitled: “The world of the self-alienated spirit.” Hegel describes in it the self-alienation of spirit in “faith”: “The world (*Welt*) of this spirit splits into a duplicated (*gedoppelte*) one: the first is the world of effectiveness or of spirit’s alienation (*Entfremdung*) itself; but the other, that which spirit, lifting itself up above the first (*über die erste sich erhebend*), builds to itself in aether of pure consciousness (*Äther des reinen Bewußtseins*).”<sup>26</sup> Marx has employed as demarcators of this text its structure, and the key words and phrases or similar ones, and reiterations of them: world, duplication, alienation, lifting itself up above, corresponding the final “fixes to itself a kingdom in the clouds” to the world that spirit “builds to itself in aether of pure consciousness.”

Marx constitutes thus Hegel’s text as what I call counter-text, as a text that completes his own. In this Marx does not mention the “alienation itself” (then he mentions its essence, the self-contradicting), but he makes it present through the counter-text. Insofar as he uses this against Feuerbach, the reference of Hegel to the “self-alienation itself” becomes

26. G. W. F. Hegel. *Phänomenologie des Geistes*. In *Hegel’s Werke*. Vol. 2. Berlin: Duncker und Humblot 1841. P. 356.

critique of the overlooking of it by the former. Now, for Hegel faith is “religion as escape from the effective world”; philosophy on the contrary would make effective the content of religion, but correspondingly in form of concept.<sup>27</sup> The use of the Hegelian language in describing the fact of religious self-alienation has hence the ulterior effect of turning Hegel’s critique of faith against himself. Similarly to faith, philosophy builds to itself a self-subsistent duplicate of the world in the clouds.

To understand a little more precisely Marx’s critique, we must consider the Hegelian whole that it presupposes. There are an “immediate self-subsistence,” which here is the alienated world, and the one that the world in and for itself, that is, the substance constitutes.<sup>27</sup> But Hegel’s substance is spirit, that is, a self-subsistent abstraction of the world, and the alienated world identifies itself with the sensible one.<sup>28</sup> The substance hence constitutes its self-subsistence by dissolving this world into the “concept.”<sup>29</sup> For Marx, thus, the philosophical self-alienation consists in making self-subsistent the abstract process of elaboration of the world into concept. In thesis 5, in reference to this characterizing act, such alienated thinking is described as “abstract thinking.”

### **The Text Itself and Difficulties Arising from its Gnoseologizing Reading**

In the first sentence of the document Marx presents “the capital defect of all hitherto-existed materialism” and the principle of the new materialism. The defect is that the object

27. Hegel. *Wissenschaft der Logik*. Part 2. In *Hegel’s Werke*. Vol. 5. Berlin: Duncker und Humblot 1834. Pp. 163-164,

28. Hegel. *Phänomenologie*. Pp. 574 and 590.

29. Ibid. P. 591.

(*Gegenstand*) is not grasped “as *sensibly human activity, practice*; not subjectively.” For the established reading the object is the real as such, and Marx opposes a new theory of knowledge to that of the old materialism. The defect of this one would be that the object to know is not grasped “as OBJECT (OR PRODUCT) OF *sensibly human activity, practice*.” But this OBJECT (OR PRODUCT) OF is something alien to the text itself. Marx says simply that the object is not grasped “as (*als*) *sensibly human activity, practice*.” The prejudice according to which Marx formulates here a theory of knowledge is what leads the tradition to violate the text by inserting this OBJECT (OR PRODUCT) OF into it. That this text has an epistemological content is “transparent” for this reading; it does not “see” hence that it itself constitutes a superadded difficulty.<sup>30</sup>

What the text itself demands, thus, is the grasping of the object simply “as (*als*) *sensibly human activity, practice*.” Now, the particle *als*, “as” has here the meaning that it has, for example, in Aristotle’s phrase “being as being” (*on he on*): IN THE RESPECT IN WHICH IT IS. Aristotle’s phrase means: being IN THE RESPECT IN WHICH IT IS being, and that of Marx: the object IN THE RESPECT IN WHICH IT IS *sensibly human activity, practice*. But an object which is *sensibly human activity, practice*, cannot be other than the human object. Such is the very simple act of inference which the epistemologizing overreading blocked. The object to be grasped is man insofar as he is object, man as objective being. And that the defect of grasping of this object is the capital one implies that man as object is the capital object of materialism.

The text itself confirms counter-textually this result. Feuerbach mentioned, the capital object, insofar as it is grasped by the old materialism, concretizes itself in a key

30. See for Althusser himself: Althusser, op. cit. P. 194.

passage of his *Principles of the Philosophy of the Future*, according to which “man, including nature as basis of man” is “the highest object (*Gegenstand*) of philosophy.”<sup>31</sup> And man on the basis of nature means man “as object (*Gegenstand*) of the heart,” that is, as object of the senses, as sensible object.<sup>32</sup> In Marx’s “the object (*der Gegenstand*),” the definite article “the” (*der*) indicates the “capital” or “highest object” standing in the mind of the reader of Feuerbach who is the potential contemporary reader of the “Theses.” Marx applies thus to Feuerbach in particular what he has stated about the hitherto-existed materialism in general. The application makes explicit what in the general statement was implicit. The object, which is the capital object of philosophy, is man including nature as basis of man, that is, man as effectiveness, sensibility, matter.

Now, we have referred to the defect of the hitherto-existed materialism in its negative formulation, put briefly: it does not grasp the object as activity. Positively expressed, the defect is that “the object [...] is grasped only under the form of the object (*Objekt*) or of intuition.” Excluded the object (*Gegenstand*) in the respect in which it is activity, it remains the object in the respect in which it is passivity. The object under the form of intuition, therefore, can only be the passive object that man is in intuiting or perceiving. But “[under the form] of intuition” is appositive of “under the form of the object (*Objekt*).” The object (*Objekt*) is thus the passive object (*Gegenstand*) that man is in perceiving. Such is just the form under which objective man is grasped in the *Principles*.<sup>33</sup>

31. Ludwrig Feuerbach. *Grundsätze der Philosophie der Zukunft*. Zürich und Winterthur: Literarisches Comptoir 1843. § 55.

32. Ibid. §§ 59 and 35.

33. See, e.g., ibid. § 41.

Now, the essence of man "is the ensemble of social relationships" (thesis 6). The *object* (*Objekt*), which man is on one of his sides, is hence the individuals in contradiction with their social relationships (theses 6 and 4). Man must use this immediate objectivity as material of the practice, which he is on his other side, to objectify his social essence in the "human society" (thesis 10).

The phrase "as *sensibly human activity, practice*" is described appositionally by the adverb "subjectively" (*subjektiv*), that is, "as subject." To grasp the object (*Gegenstand*) "as sensible human activity, practice" is to grasp it "as subject." "Subject" hence means activity. But according to Hegel, "the object (*Objekt*)" in its "undetermined sense" is "an object (*Gegenstand*)" for the "activity of the subject,"<sup>34</sup> and the principle of philosophy is the substance grasped as subject, that is, as the activity of transforming such object (*Objekt*) into that which objectifies what it is in itself.<sup>35</sup> Thus, by saying that Feuerbach grasps the object (*Gegenstand*) only as *object* (*Object*) and not *subjectively*, Marx turns Hegel against Feuerbach; but insofar as man is the one who constitutes himself as object, he also rejects Hegel's substance. The next sentence of the text expresses this rejection: "the active side" is "developed by idealism," but "abstractly" (*abstrakt*), that is, as side of the abstraction of man Hegel calls substance.

On this basis we can turn to those difficulties, alluded at the beginning, which the tradition imputes to the text. The established reading puts as principle of the new materialism the gnoseological grasping of the real as object or product of practice. It expects of the following theses the development of this content, not that of the practical constitution of man as

34. Hegel. *Wissenschaft der Logik*. Part 2. P. 178.

35. Hegel. *Phänomenologie*. Pp. 14 and 19.

object. Therefore, to illustrate this with thesis 11, that reading neglects the relation of the fantastical objectification of man in religion and abstract thinking with such thesis, that is, it does not think of self-subsistent abstraction in asking about the meaning of “to interpret.” What the epistemologizing reading demands is to understand “interpretation” either as theory in general, in which case the thesis would be a pragmatistic refusal of the theory, or as theory without transforming effects, which is the reply of most of Marxists. The difficulty of adopting one of these positions arises directly from the gnoseologizing overreading of the first sentence.

But what is really at issue, as already shown, is the grasping of the object, not as such, but as human one. Materialism grasps this object as sensible one in opposition to religion and idealism, which grasp it as constituted in virtue of a self-subsistent abstraction. But the intuiting materialism, because it does not grasp this object as practice, cannot explain its self-subsistent abstraction. Feuerbach is hence forced to replace the latter by that of the “genus” as meaning of the world, that is, he is forced “to only interpret” this one “differently.” On the contrary, grasped man as practice, his self-contradicting explains the self-subsistent kingdom, and the point for his social objectification is then to transform the world. This is the central line of reasoning developed in the eleven theses on Feuerbach. Marx confirms it through the previously presented references from thesis 11 to theses 4 and 3. According to the text itself, thus, traditional difficulties as the above described one are pseudo-difficulties.

## **Conclusions**

The contents of the “Theses on Feuerbach” as a whole must

be, naturally, exposed in a special work. But for the moment Marx's techniques of presentation as the pointed out earlier show that the enigmatic of these eleven theses is a myth. They constitute a text full of clarifying appositions. These are fulfilled by reformulations of contents, through which the logical connections between them are highlighted. By constituting texts of other authors as counter-texts, Marx develops his own text and corroborates or rectifies the direction of its reading. Finally, our brief analysis of the first sentence of the document and of its logical relation with thesis 11, is enough to show that at least certain significant difficulties do not arise from the text, but rather from the epistemologizing reading, which superimposed onto the referred sentence constitutes the first of those difficulties.

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